



August 2013 Client Newsletter

Dear Judi,

A customer is four times more likely to defect to a competitor if the problem is service-related than price or product-related. *(Bain & Company)*

Judi

Have You Resolved to Enhance the Customer Service You Provide This Year?

Give your business [an honest look](#) to see if you're following through with these 10 safeguards to ensure the best possible customer service from your company and all its employees.

- 1. Be nice:** When you're nice, everything goes well, even if a customer has a complaint.
- 2. Be accessible, respond quickly:** Answering the phone or an email request quickly is key to getting top marks from your customers. In fact, being accessible quickly is consistently ranked among the top factors for customer satisfaction.
- 3. Give the benefit of the doubt:** Don't fall back on policies and procedures to respond to a customer's complaint. The customer is right, remember?
- 4. Don't lose your cool:** Arguing or getting defensive just doesn't work with customers. Stay above the emotion.
- 5. Be generous:** When you're generous, you'll reap the rewards. Think about how you can offer, time, tangibles or just a generous spirit.
- 6. Get to the point:** Answer the customer's question or complaint quickly, taking a direct route from "A" to "B". That means if you already know how the conversation is going to turn out, skip to the outcome. Everyone appreciates saving time.
- 7. Find the "happiest" solution:** Everybody wants to be happy. Consider what would make your customer happiest and do that.
- 8. Smile:** When you smile, your messages are more well-received. That goes for in writing and on the phone, too.
- 9. Listen:** Listening to your customers requires using your brain. You must truly understand what a customer needs to fulfill that need.
- 10. Empathize:** Make sure your customer knows you know how he or she feels. This is called "empathy" and the more you can show it, the better.

Now, you may think your company does all 10 of these things already, but

In This Issue

[Resolve to Enhance the Customer Service You Provide](#)

[Harder to Make Up Than to Break Up With a Customer](#)

[5 Key Ingredients for a Customer Loyalty Plan](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

there's always room for improvement. Implementing a mystery shopping program such as those available through Customer Perspectives can help you be sure and, with its results, help you plan to make improvements.

Harder To Make Up Than To Break Up With A Customer

A customer will break up with your business if you ignore him or her. That's a fact. According to a study [mentioned in this article](#), you have the potential to lose 20 percent of your customers if you fail to nurture the relationship. One way to nurture customers is to make sure you answer their questions in a timely matter, whether those questions come via Twitter, Facebook, email, in person or by the phone. If you don't do it in a timely fashion, you'll lose them. Your chances of winning that customer back, according to the same study, are 20 to 40 percent. Better to have not lost them in the first place.

So, do you ensure you don't lose customers due to neglect? Hire the right people, be responsive and act like a human, offer ways to stay in touch, show empathy for a customer's feelings, save your excuses and try to learn from these bad experiences.

Also, you might hire a mystery shopping firm such as Customer Perspectives to make sure your employees are following through.

5 Key Ingredients for a Customer Loyalty Plan

Consistent communication with your customers. That's what it takes to develop their loyalty toward your business, according to [this article](#). How do you do that? Consider these five suggestions:

- 1) **Deliver your message across all media channels.** That means whatever you say in print, online, in email newsletters and in social media is the same message, delivered in a way the customer can understand.
 - 2) **Customer retention:** Ask what else your customer needs and whether they know of others who need your services.
 - 3) **Customer surveys:** Satisfaction surveys can show you why your company was chosen and that can give you a clue as to how to gain and retain more customers. For this, you may want to use a third-party vendor to deliver your survey.
 - 4) **Email marketing:** Use your customer data base to generate leads, upsell and provide helpful information that will cement your bond to the customer.
 - 5) **Thank you notes:** If you can send handwritten, personalized thank you notes to a customer, do so.
- In addition to these kinds of customer service efforts, you may consider conducting customer evaluations using mystery shoppers, for a realistic view of whether your efforts are working. Customer Perspectives can provide that kind of evaluation.
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Upcoming Events:

Process Driven Innovation Conference - September 17-18 in Philadelphia.
For more info, [click here](#).

Big Data Exchange - September 22-24 in San Francisco. For more info, [click here](#).

ESOMAR Annual Congress - September 22-25 in Istanbul, Turkey. For more info, [click here](#).

Customer Insights: Turning Data Analytics Into Intelligence - October 2-3 in Chicago. For more info, [click here](#).

The Marketing Insight Forum - October 3rd in New York. For more information, for more information, [click here](#).

CASRO Annual Conference - October 7-10 in Los Angeles. For more info, [click here](#).

Corporate Researchers Conference - October 16-18 in Dallas. For more information, [click here](#).

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